qualifications, residence, income, multiple dealership norms etc. Selection of eligible candidates is made by the Dealer Selection Boards on merit. Reservation for different social objective categories is provided as under:—

Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (SC/ ST)	—25%
Physicaly Handicapped Persons (PH)	—5%
Paramilitary/Police/Government Personnel (PMP)	—8%
Defence Personnel (DC)	—8%
Freedom fighters (FF)	—2%
Outstanding Sprotspersons (OSP)	—2%
Open (O)	—50%

Also, 33% of the dealerships/ distributorships in all the categories mentioned above are reserved for Women belonging to that category. Other things being equal, Unmarried women above 40 years of age without earning parents and Widows are given priority over others.

Oil Companies Investment in Gail

1034. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether IOC and ONGC propose to invest in GAIL equity; and

(b) if so, the strategy behind the move?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes Sir, through purchase of a part of Government held equity in GAIL.

(b) The alliance between IOC, ONGC and GAIL through equity participation in each other can provide synergic advantage to these companies, enhance their competitiveness and give them greater levaraging capacity.

Utilisation of Regional Research Laboratory at Jorhat

1035. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) how do ONGC (ERBC) and OIL (Duliajan) utilise Regional Research Laboratory at Jorhat for their industrial research work; and

(b) wheather it is fact that ONGC (ERBC) and OIL (Duliajan) prefer R.R.L. at Dehradun to R.R.L. at Jorhat; if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) ONGC and OIL are utilising consultancy services from RRL at Jorhat for their various industrial project research work like Bio-remediation of crude oil sludge, soil investigation, geotechnical investigation for effluent treatment plant, impact of gas flaring on paddy, tea etc., development of polymer drilling additives, development of timber substitutes, geo-microbiological property, development of flow improvers for high wax crude etc. The analytical facilities are also utilised for different analytical requirements.

(b) There is no RRL at Dehradun. However, depending upon the nature of requirements, projects for which necessary infrastructure is not available with RRL, Jorhat, are referred to Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun for study.

Royalty for crude

1036. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a long pending demand from the Government of Gujarat for revision of royalty for crude;

(b) what action has been taken on that; and

(c) when the amount of *ad hoc* increase in the royalty rates pending the final decision will be released to the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Government of Gujarat has requested the Central Government to fix the final rate of royalty on crude oil for the period 1993—98. Crude price and royalty rate are worked out on the basis of the actual weighted average cost of production figures audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General. The crude price and final rate of royalty for the period 1993—96 is being worked out, after which necessary adjustments would be made against the 'on account' payments already made. For the period 1996—98, crude price and royalty rate would be worked out on receipt of audited figures of the cost of production and rate of royalty of crude oil from CAG for that period.

Industrial Kerosene

1037. SHRI GHUFRAN ASZAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the quantity of industrial Kerosene sold by the PSUs in different States is deducted out of the quantity of kerosene allotted under PDS to that respective State;

(b) whether the quantity of industrial kerosene to be supplied in a particular State is fixed or is supplied as per the demand of the industrial consumers; and

(c) whether ex-storage point price of the industrial kerosene is almost similar to the ex-Kandla price of kerosene being imported by the parallel marketeers of kerosene?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Kerosene is allocated product and annual allocation is made by the Central Government to States/UTs. for distribution through PDS. However, State Governments allocate small quantity out of the total allocations to industrial units based on valid permits issued by District Authorities. *Consequent upon decanalisation* of imports of kerosene in April, 1993, under Parallel Marketers Scheme, all State Governments were advised to reduce/ eleminate allocation of kerosene for industrial units from P.D.S.

(c) Yes, Sir. The pricing of indusrial kerosene has been decontrolled effective 1.4.98. Accordingly, the oil companies are now fixing prices of industrial kerosene on their own based on market consideration.

Quantity of kerosene under PDS

1038. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) how much minimum quantity of kerosene under PDS is fixed to make the dealership economically viable;

(b) by what time all the subsidised Kerosene Oil dealerships belonging to SCs/STs and ladies shall be made economically viable and for their smooth running; and

(c) whether Government would issue direction to SLC and PSUs to give total yearly increased quantity to such dealers running below the economically viable limit and newly commissioned dealerships?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) As per the existing norms, a Kerosene Dealership is viable provided the dealer is able to market quantity of 75 KL of Kerosene per month.

(b) and (c) Allocations are made to Kerosene dealers including SC/ST and Women category by oil companies/State